

WASPI SCOTLAND

MINUTES OF MEETING JUNE 20 2017, HOLYROOD, EDINBURGH.

ATTENDEES,

MSP's

Richard Leonard, Rachael Hamilton, Iain Gray, Gerry McGuire, Clare Haughey, Amy Watson, Sandra White, -(Chair),

WASPI

Anne Houghton, Andrea Gregory, Linda Carmichael, Rosie Dickson, Elizabeth Mc Quarrie, Ann Fraser, Joan Fraser, Olive Sharpe, Susan Bolland, Jane Cowley, Anne Potter, -(Secretariat).

APOLOGIES

Susan Beevers, Jackie Baillie

1- Welcome & Apologies,

All attendees welcomed & apologies noted.

2- Action Points, (See attached.)

3- Impact of election on WASPI Scotland.

Election results discussed & all felt the media coverage regarding WASPI issues was positive. Jane Cowley commented that the meeting with Jeremy Corbyn just prior to the election had been worthwhile & resulted in noticeable impact, with many more Labour MP's showing support. It was also good to have support from Lib Dems as well as SNP & Greens.

Linda Carmichael commented that the changes of MP's in her area may result in better support & looking to increase WASPI awareness.

Clare Haughey emphasised the need to continue communicating with MP's.

Olive Sharpe now has 3 tory MP's in Moray, Banff & Buchan with 1 happy to meet with WASPI, 1 Not signing pledge but is secretly supportive & 1 Not speaking to WASPI at all.

Joan Fraser felt that people were showing a bit more interest in the campaign when provided with the information regarding WASPI & SPA delays.

Rosie Dickson stated that as a result of the election & WASPI publicity Glasgow & Lanarkshire had experienced a large turnout at the latest drop in session.

Iain Graham confirmed that he had noticed the high profile of WASPI publicity leading up to election.

Ann Fraser was able to confirm that Ayrshire hospitals were allowing WASPI campaign literature to be displayed & circulated.

Elizabeth McQuarrie has had support from Credit Unions locally.

Sandra White asked Amy Watson to update on where Tories stand with regard to WASPI campaign. Anne Potter requested that Amy could perhaps encourage Ruth Davidson to show support & Amy agreed to do so. (AP 1/2)

Sandra White also suggested writing from CPG to ask for Support & stance on the WASPI issue. (AP2/2)

Rosie Dickson & Ann Fraser suggested writing to David Mundell, & Elizabeth McQuarrie reiterated the need to fully explain the WASPI position. (AP3/2)

4 -WASPI Legal update.

Jane Cowley started by saying she is keen for WASPI to communicate with Ruth Davidson.

£100k raised since Nov

DWP struggling to cope with workload. Many more cases in pipeline. Using 1 test case not suitable due to variety of issues waspi women are encountering. Solicitors have written to complain about timescales.

Continuing to encourage all women affected to write their complaint letters.

Lawyers are still hopeful of success.

WASPI have written to DWP Minister, & after a lengthy delay received disappointing response.

5. Plans for Campaign & feedback.

Joan Fraser, Rosie Dickson, Jane Cowley & Andrea Gregory asked for clarity on devolved powers, plus more accurate info needs to be available.

Andrea Gregory also wants £1.1bn spent on pensions fully explained, & quote by Amber Rudd that settlement of the WASPI ask would cost £70bn. Jane Cowley also challenged these claims.

Ann Fraser felt the 18 month delay to SPA was misleading.

Rosie Dickson emphasised there are many difficulties dealing with job centre plus made reference to Cridland report.

Sandra White confirmed Scottish Govt not able to change pension arrangement, though the Pensions act Scotland could find a benefit but not a pension as such. She also raised the question about whether or not the State Pension is a contract?

Iain Gray stated Pensions are not devolved.

Olive Sharpe & Ann Fraser commented that all monies paid to UK Government & would not expect SP from Scottish Govt.

6. PLANS FOR CAMPAIGN

Iain Gray said he was very impressed by campaign.

Sandra White is keen to distribute template complaint letters & Factsheets & suggested we send copies to all MSP's. for onward circulation. (AP 4/2)

Ann Fraser proposed CAB & Unite to be contacted & for more drop in help sessions on complaint letters to be carried out.

Jane Cowley agreed on the importance of letter writing process.

Rosie Dickson confirmed the drop in sessions were really appreciated by all women who attended. Rosie also mentioned the video which is planned for You tube where many women will take part in relating their SP issues using an appropriate WASPI script.

Sandra White suggested raising the WASPI issue for another full Scottish Parliamentary debate sometime in September, followed by a WASPI reception in Holyrood sometime in October.
Room to be located with a suitable date. (AP 5/2)

Rachael Hamilton will contact David Mundell & Ruth Davidson regarding their stance/support of the WASPI women. (AP 6/2)

Sandra White will contact Jean Freeman,(Pensions Minister) (AP7/2)

7-AOB

Date of next meeting – after summer recess. TBA.